

# The Saturday "News" Special Foreign Service.

Wrecked By Boy Bandits.  
Ten Youths of Lapy in White Russia Blew  
Up This Train, By Means of Home Made Bombs

Gustave Laudet

George Laudet

"The Star Spangled Banner" to be Sung By Fireworks.

## THE CHILD CRIMINALS OF RUSSIA BECOME A NATIONAL PERIL.

Alarming Increase in Infantile Crime and Immorality in the Land of the White Father Has at Last Aroused the Authorities Into Tardy Investigation.

Special Correspondence.

PARIS, Dec. 30.—If the hopes of Georges and Gustave Laudet, two French savants, are realized, the world at large will soon be furnished to several startling sensations. For instance we are confidently promised, as the result of their remarkable discoveries in word photography and the reproduction of the human voice by means of explosives, that we shall shortly listen to rockets which, as they shoot into the air and light up the sky by the brilliant colors, will sing "The Star Spangled Banner" or "Take Doodle." Another result, it is said, will be the disappearance of all local defects in speech, including, of course, the American twang, and having the coming of the millennium when the Yankee will be able to make himself understood to a Cockney without the aid of an interpreter learned in the vocabulary of each.

In days to come, the discovery will develop out of all recognition, as an utterance agent, the gramophone of which Messrs. Taft and Bryan have made such effective use during the past few months. Speeches will then be communicated to mighty crowds far beyond the reach of the voice of even the "silver-tongued orator." Applied to the petard it will warn a train that the line is blocked, or detonating fuses under the action of heat can inform a cutter that a fire has broken out in a distant part of the premises he has been sent to watch; and finally, the smoking explosive might conceivably be used in warfare as a word of command.

VOICES REPRODUCED.

Georges Laudet's first discovery with regard to the reconstruction of sound was a 100 and was obtained by the combination of detonating gaseous mixtures. A detonating gaseous mixture is burned in a special burner, the portions in a state of combustion being maintained by the sound of the apparatus. The gas, as it burns, reproduces faithfully the sounds uttered. These results are contained by the aid of special apparatus and were communicated to the Academy of Science. The invention reproduces all sounds of whatever nature they may be whether sung or spoken, with an intensity equal to eight or ten times the original speech. This intensity, it is also the power to obtain the curves may be magnified by increasing the pressure of the detonating mixture or composition. The apparatus employed varies according as you wish to reproduce the voice or reproduce it by taking as the starting point a gramophone or phonograph disc.

For instance, if it is desired to reproduce a speech many times over, it may be registered first of all on a gramophone. The sound is then applied to the magnifying apparatus. If, on the other hand, it is merely desired to deliver the speech once, all that is necessary is to speak it directly into the apparatus, which reproduces it, magnified eight to ten-fold without the need of a gramophone.

The invention has already received a practical application. In certain theaters a combination of the cinematograph and the sound apparatus may be seen, in which the actor is seen on the screen and his voice is heard through the apparatus. This is a very simple but it is not a very perfect reproduction of the original speech. The success thus obtained with regard to reproducing speech started the brothers, who are now working on a new path, a new path of research, which is not possible, they believe, to obtain a perfect reproduction of the original speech.

The success thus obtained with regard to reproducing speech started the brothers, who are now working on a new path, a new path of research, which is not possible, they believe, to obtain a perfect reproduction of the original speech. The success thus obtained with regard to reproducing speech started the brothers, who are now working on a new path, a new path of research, which is not possible, they believe, to obtain a perfect reproduction of the original speech.

These were not the first in the field. Russian speech had already been photographed. Dr. Marage had succeeded in photographing it by using the currents as a medium, but this was a very faulty, for it introduced distortions into the curves and thus rendered abortive any attempt to secure absolute accuracy. It is impossible to obtain without the aid of the photographic apparatus. An illustration of this deformation is found in the illustration which the voice undergoes in speaking over the

passengers till somebody throws a handful of coppers to get rid of them.

In the majority of cases the beggars are not victims of real destitution. Of for them work and they will not take it. There is nobody to beg from them. Petty theft and pilfering exist everywhere; but they are carried to a high art in Russia.

JUVENILE PUEL THIEVES.

A familiar instance of this is to be seen where a public street is being repaired. Small boys and girls are to be met carrying bundles of brand new wooden blocks that they have stolen. By the section of the road under repair they swarm like flies round a pair of wheels. Nobody takes any notice of them, least of all the workmen. They run up openly to the stacks of wood, take as many as they can carry and run home to return for more. The public who pass look on indifferently. It is not their business. The overseers look the other way; they do not pay for the wood, so it does not matter. It occurs to nobody that this is a question of public interest. And so the children are encouraged to steal. The same thing happens at the coal depots. It is computed that fifty per cent. of the coal brought into the towns is stolen before the trucks have been in the station 24 hours by children whose ages range from six to 12.

"LIVE BY THE KNIFE."

When the Russian children reach the age of 12 they begin to learn how to use knives, which are as universal in Russia as the rifle is in Italy. Ninety per cent. of the offspring of the working classes learn no trade. Literally they "live by the knife." Stabbing is so frequent that quiet unarmed people avoid walking in back streets after dusk. It is not uncommon for a woman to be stabbed in the back while passing through a crowded street. The culprit is, of course, a young "knifer" who is learning to stab. Frequently, if caught, he can give no reason for his crime but a desire for practice.

CHILD HOLDUPS.

In some towns the knife has been discarded for revolvers, given to them by revolutionary adherents, who collect their funds in England and America. These men used boys and girls to murder policemen and officials; now the boy and girl use the weapon on their own account. There is little doubt that the Revolutionaries are much to blame for the tremendous increase of child criminals. When their funds run short they used to

raid shops and banks. They would send a girl of 10 or 12 first. She entered the building unsuspecting and, pulling a revolver from under her shawl, fired. Her accomplices then rushed in, taking advantage of the panic and confusion, and raided the safes and tills. Now that the Revolutionaries have been silenced the boys and girls raid alone. The girl invariably is sent first in order to disarm suspicion, and the band of infant marauders act in the same way as the Revolutionaries did before them. They rush up to those in the shop, fire or put revolvers to the head of their victims, while the accomplices squelch the booty and decamp. As nobody cares to fire at a child the raid generally succeeds.

DESPERATE CRIMINALS.

These young criminals are inferior to their elders in their methods of escape and in getting rid of incriminating evidence. They generally leave some clue that speeds the police upon their track. One boy of 14 who helped to raid a country house—shooting the squire and his wife—carried off the dead man's fowling piece and tried to take it a few days later at a fair held in the neighboring town. A laborer from the squire's estate, to whom it was offered, recognized it and had the boy arrested. The whole band was rounded up, and the eldest proved to be no more than 15 years old.

In another case a youthful bandit having stolen a gold watch from the body of a rich farmer he had murdered, immediately tried to pawn it at the nearest town. The pawnbroker, struck by the quality of the workmanship, sent for the police, who searched the boy's pockets and found the watch. He had taken part in six desperate raids committed in the neighborhood.

MADE THEIR OWN BOMBS.

What these young criminals lack in circumspection, however, they make up in intrepidity. It seems almost incredible that 10 boys whose ages ranged from 10 to 16 should wreck a train loaded with soldiers. Yet this happened a short time ago near a station called Lapy, in White Russia. They put 12 bombs on the line just before the train was scheduled to pass. Some of them were exploded by the boys, who, armed with revolvers, injured several soldiers and killed the engine driver. As the train, like the majority of trains in Russia, was going very slowly, the results were less disastrous than might have been expected. The bomb throwers watched the explosion from the forest adjoining the plant and fired with revolvers. So soon as the train was stopped the youthful wreckers were

followed and arrested. Each of them had a bomb tied to a stick he was carrying. They confessed to having made the bombs themselves with old sardine tins, a little nitro-glycerine and some bits of iron. The police have now issued orders forbidding the sale of nitro-glycerine to customers unless mixed with some other ingredient that renders it non-explosive.

KILLED BY BOYS.

Perhaps the most callous case of crime committed by children occurred in Warsaw in the beginning of September last. A head-waiter, who had charge of the beer boys, or piccols, in a well known restaurant, was found terribly mutilated at the foot of some steps leading down to the river. An eye-witness of the crime, who had run away to save his own life, told the police that the waiter, Owczak by name, was set upon by half a dozen small boys, who stabbed him with their knives and threatened to have the piccols employed in the restaurant. Owczak, a man of excellent character, had complained several times of the piccols' laziness and impertinence to customers and threatened to have the most troublesome one dismissed if things did not improve. Thereupon the piccols held a meeting, at which they determined, as they said, to "uphold their honor" and punish Owczak. They followed him home and killed him. When questioned about the crime they admitted it, saying that "brotherly solidarity compelled their revenge, and that they had no right to dismiss one of them, since all were equal." The eldest of them was 16. The most appalling part of the story is that all these children planned the murder together and no one was found among them who had enough conscience to tell the authorities or to warn Owczak of the fate which awaited him.

CHILDREN'S VENDETTA.

A somewhat similar case of revenge occurred in the Caucasus recently. There the people scarcely ever think of taking their grievances to a tribunal; all disputes are settled privately—by means of the knife. But even in the Caucasus vendetta used to be left to grown-up men and women. Now the children indulge in it. A well-to-do peasant was murdered by his nephew, several of the dead man's family were mere children, and among them was his younger sister, a girl of 10. She called all the children of the village together and asked what was to

be done to avenge her brother. All of them said that one of the murderer's family must be sacrificed. So they set out together and began to play by the murderer's hut. Nobody took any notice of them, and little by little the 10-year-old child ran into the hut, saw the father of her brother's murderer asleep and, creeping up to him, plunged a knife deep into his throat. Then she and her companions dragged the dead body to the threshold of the hut, where it lay till the family came back from their work in the fields. When arrested, she said it was her duty to avenge her brother, and that, if anything happened to her, all her playmates had promised she would be avenged in the same way. The authorities there had not been brought up to trust such a childish murderess, as the law prescribes 20 years in Siberia for adults, and there are no reformatories in Russia.

INCREASE IN IMMORALITY.

Three of the children who took part in the train wrecking at Lapy were the sons of well-to-do parents, one of an engineer and the other of a doctor. This means that they had not been brought up in the streets, but received some kind of training at home and in school. That this training is getting worse and worse is proved by the appalling increase in immorality among schoolboys and girls in Russian towns. It is this fact that has finally stirred the governors of provinces to action.

The average Russian teacher takes no interest whatever in his pupils after school hours. Where they go and what they do concerns him not. As he often takes boarders—whose parents live some distance from the school—it is easy to understand that 50 per cent. of the schoolchildren are left entirely alone as soon as their lesson books are shut for the day. Towns are few and far between, so the homes of the majority of the pupils are miles away.

Whether the commissions lately convened by the governors of provinces will do any good is a matter of doubt. The root of the evil lies in the school system; in the lack of institutions for watching and providing for children who have no parents to do so, and in the absence of proper home training. Until these wants are supplied all the police orders in the world will not prevent the terrible increase in infantile crime, which is at last occupying the attention of all those who take the trouble to think in Russia. Meanwhile, the prisons are filled with children, and the growing generation is ruined, physically and mentally, before it leaves the school room for the world.

MARIE FILON.

near, of the School of Physics and Chemistry, where he was a pupil of Prof. Curie, whose name is for ever connected with radium and whose tragic death is still in every one's memory. Curie was worshipped by his pupils who looked upon him as a dear friend rather than as a professor. A little anecdote illustrative of the great scientist's modesty is too good to be omitted here. "At a time when the whole civilized world was ringing with Curie's fame," said M. Gustave Laudet to me, "I met him one Sunday by the Avenue de l'Observatoire. He was wheeling the perambulator in which was his first born baby and his wife was hanging on his arm. They looked just like a couple of bourgeois out for their Sunday walk." M. Curie, whose modesty equals that of his husband, has taken the lamented professor's place at the College de France and is carrying on his work of research.

CHARLES DUBOIS.

Guests of the Ambassador's Daughter Relegated to Garret.

Special Correspondence.

LONDON, Dec. 31.—It was a case of either letting the magnificent sport on the Chilton estate go this season or arriving at some decision whereby sportsmen could be housed under difficulties. The Hon. Mrs. John Ward, nee Jean Reid, tackled the problem and managed to put up her friends in the story under the roof at her newly acquired home. For the beautiful "Lodge" is in the hands of bankers and auctioneers notwithstanding the fact that the late tenant had just spent \$75,000 upon it.

The guests, who included the Duke of Roxburghe, Mr. Ward's sister, Lady Wolverton and her husband, said they never enjoyed a visit more and made it all the more so by the choice of the house. They were naturally attendant on the condition of the establishment. Although they were housed in the garrets, the rooms were comfortable, the chief drawback being that they had to use the stairs to reach the bedrooms. The Duke of Roxburghe, who is a great lover of the hunt, said that the shooting on the estate is some of the finest in England.

It is an immense house with scores of bedrooms so that when the mansion is finished, Mrs. Ward will have her heart's desire, namely, to be able to entertain big parties of her friends at one time. It is built in Georgian style, a period when architects had such a capacity for getting atmosphere and space into their work together with solid comfort which has never been equalled in the more artistic periods since. There is a splendid picture gallery at Chilton which will, in time, no doubt be filled with works of art. It has precious and priceless stained glass windows and is paneled in beautiful old mahogany.

SUMPTUOUS MEALS.

No one expressed the least surprise at the announcement of the engagement of Lord Granard and Beatrice Mills, the magnificent Beatrice, as we call her here, save a few noted Irish belles who in spite of definite knowledge to the effect that Granard intended to hang up his hat at the home of the Ogden Mills, insisted that he would marry a girl of his own country. "Beatrice is over-dressed," said the Irish belles. "Beatrice looks as if she was advertising a jeweler's shop. Granard, like every man here, and detests an over-dressed woman." So on and so on.

Mrs. Mills has certainly been the most sumptuously attired young girl who has ever appeared at Dorchester House balls, and that is saying a lot. Many a time she has cut out even American duchesses in the glory of her jewels. It was said that Lord Granard once re-monstrated with her on her love of jewelry, but that she laughed him to scorn and, in a lady-like way, said something which left him in no doubt as to her attitude. "Probably the knowing young minx realized that this was about the best way she could go about bringing him up to the point. He is one of the men, for of course, he is a great party, who has been initiated with attention from all sides. A man in his position could practically marry any one! It was Beatrice's 'cheeky' manners and independence which did the trick. Like every other American belle who has married into the British aristocracy, she refused him at first, realizing that this would be a dead 'beet' make him all the more determined to get her. But what religion is she? There's the rub. If my memory serves me rightly she is not a Roman Catholic and there will be ructions in Ireland as well as in other quarters if Lord Granard's wife is not."

As the wife of a lord-in-waiting to the king, the future Lady Granard will have two magnificent royal carriages at her disposal with servants who are privileged to wear the royal liveries. On state occasions, such as courts and balls, the carriage of the lord-in-waiting has the right to take precedence of all others after those of royalty.

Mr. and Mrs. McCormick Goodhart are spending the holidays at Boughton, their beautiful seat in "the garden of England," as we like to call Kent which many people consider the loveliest country in England. The McCormick Goodharts recently celebrated their golden wedding at their town house in Eaton square with true American generosity and now the event is to be observed with far more eclat in their country seat, all the poor people and their children as well as the county families having been invited to come and make merry in honor of the occasion. Lady Beatrice's sister, Mrs. Adair, is a very anxious that they should buy the place, for although the Goodharts are by no means young people they nevertheless have made the whole district lively and have scattered money right royally. Boughton is an exquisite spot with prime old-world gardens, the house being quaintly picturesque and commanding lovely views of the Kentish hills.

Lady Beatrice's sister, Mrs. Adair, is a very anxious that they should buy the place, for although the Goodharts are by no means young people they nevertheless have made the whole district lively and have scattered money right royally. Boughton is an exquisite spot with prime old-world gardens, the house being quaintly picturesque and commanding lovely views of the Kentish hills.

Lady Beatrice's sister, Mrs. Adair, is a very anxious that they should buy the place, for although the Goodharts are by no means young people they nevertheless have made the whole district lively and have scattered money right royally. Boughton is an exquisite spot with prime old-world gardens, the house being quaintly picturesque and commanding lovely views of the Kentish hills.

All Mrs. James McDonnell's friends here have been greatly grieved to hear of her serious illness in Paris. She had had to have her eyes operated upon, I hear, and has had a most trying time. This coming on the top of her husband's long illness makes matters worse. Mrs. McDonnell has been saying that "money is such a poor thing if you are very ill," and that "it won't buy health." The McDonnells have truly proved positive of that, for James McDonnell has searched the world almost to recover his, and though somewhat better never expects to be strong.

"HEN LUNCHEONS"

Some of the jolliest parties in London are given by Mrs. James McDonnell at her lovely house in Cadogan square. It was she who first introduced us to "hen luncheons" and the season before last they were quite a feature and smart English women as well as Americans, fought to be invited. In fact, if you could not say you had been to one of these gatherings you were regarded as a nobody. Last season she did practically nothing to give to her serious illness in Paris. She had had to have her eyes operated upon, I hear, and has had a most trying time. This coming on the top of her husband's long illness makes matters worse. Mrs. McDonnell has been saying that "money is such a poor thing if you are very ill," and that "it won't buy health." The McDonnells have truly proved positive of that, for James McDonnell has searched the world almost to recover his, and though somewhat better never expects to be strong.

LADY MARY.